

ADVANCEMENTS IN HEALTH PROGRAMS: REDUCING RISKY BEHAVIORS AMONG TEENS AND ADOLESCENTS

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RISKY BEHAVIORS 101

► What are risk behaviors?

It is any behavior that puts youth at risk for negative consequences.

Ex.

Smoking puts you at risk for_____

Driving under the influence of alcohol put you at risk for_____

WHY TEENAGERS TAKE RISKS?

- ✓ During these years teenagers take risks as a way of forming an identity for themselves.
- ✓ The risks teenagers take are affected by education, friends, and family members.
- ✓ Risks are a part of growing up!



HEALTHY AND UNHEALTHY RISKS

What are healthy risks behaviors?

Healthy risk behaviors include sporting activities, traveling, making new friends, or competing in athletic or academic activities.

What are unhealthy risk behaviors?

Unhealthy risks behaviors include driving too fast, texting while driving, having unprotected sex, smoking, stealing, gang related activities, and unhealthy eating habits.

RISKY BEHAVIORS 101

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) tracks youths-at-risks behaviors through the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System. This system assesses six categories of priority health risk behaviors.

1. **Unintentional Injuries and Violence**
2. **Sexual Behaviors that Contribute to Unintended Pregnancy and Sexually Transmitted Infections**
3. **Alcohol and Other Drug Use**
4. **Tobacco Use**
5. **Unhealthy Dietary Behaviors**
6. **Inadequate Physical Activity**

UNINTENTIONAL INJURY AND VIOLENCE RELATED BEHAVIORS

- ✓ **Not wearing a seatbelt**



- ✓ **Not wearing a helmet when riding a bike**



- ✓ **Riding one more times with someone who had been drinking alcohol**

- ✓ **Driving a car after drinking alcohol**

- ✓ **Carrying a weapon**

- ✓ **Having a physical fight**



SEXUAL RISK BEHAVIORS

Many teens and adolescents engage in sexual risk behaviors that can result in unwanted outcomes.

Early Sexual Activity

Unprotected Sex

Multiple Sex Partners

WHAT ARE THE UNWANTED OUTCOMES?

► Unintended Teen Pregnancies

And



► Sexually Transmitted Infections

ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND OTHER DRUG USE

Alcohol and Tobacco use have extremely negative health consequences.

- ▶ Health problems from tobacco use include heart disease, lung and oral cancers.
- ▶ According to the American Academy of Pediatrics teenagers who use tobacco are also more likely to take other risks.
- ▶ Tobacco is also considered a “gateway drug” that leads to other serious drug use.
- ▶ It has been shown that teens who drink before the age 15 are most likely to develop an addiction than those who start drinking after 21.

UNHEALTHY DIETARY BEHAVIORS

Teenagers develop unhealthy dietary behaviors over time, this can be due to:

- ▶ · Dysfunctional family situation, such as divorce, single parent, or foster care.
- ▶ · Family not eating meals together
- ▶ · Poor eating habits modeled by parents/caretakers
- ▶ · Lack of knowledge about what is healthy to eat
- ▶ · Busy schedule
- ▶ · Lack of desire to eat healthy
- ▶ · Depression and other emotional extremes

INADEQUATE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Regular physical activity can improve the health and quality of life of Americans of all ages, regardless of the presence of a chronic disease or disability. Lack of physical activity can lead to:

- Coronary heart disease
- Stroke
- High blood pressure
- Type 2 diabetes
- Depression



Among children and adolescents, physical activity can:

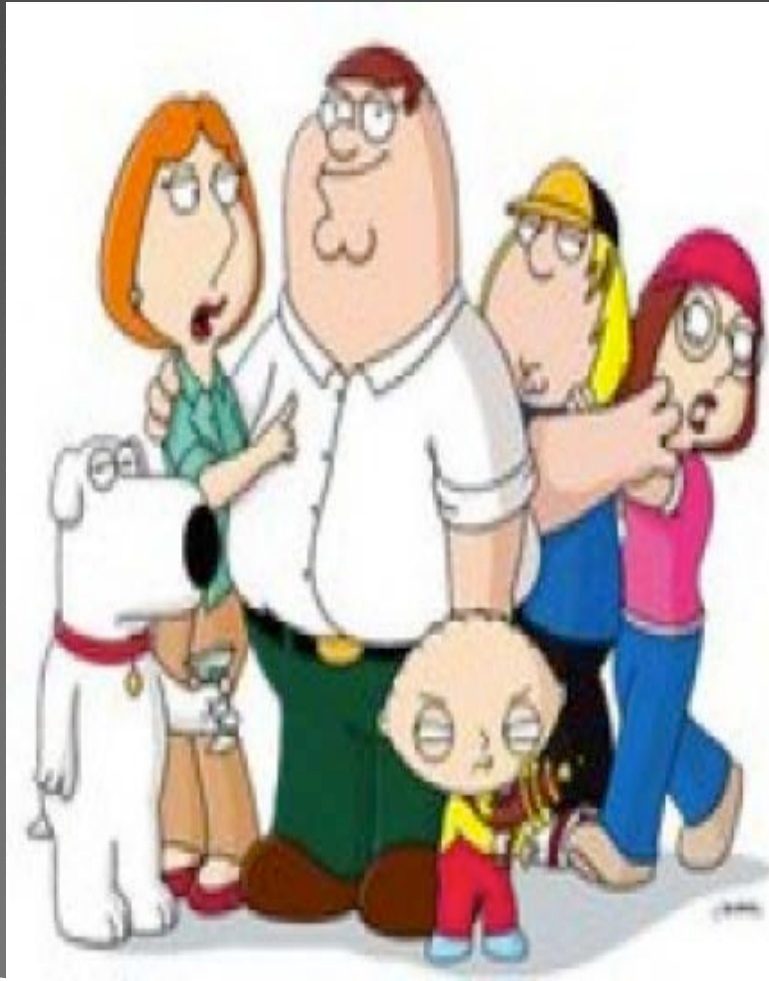
- Improve bone health
- Improve cardiorespiratory and muscular fitness
- Decrease levels of body fat
- Reduce symptoms of depression

HOW CAN WE REDUCE OUR RISKS?



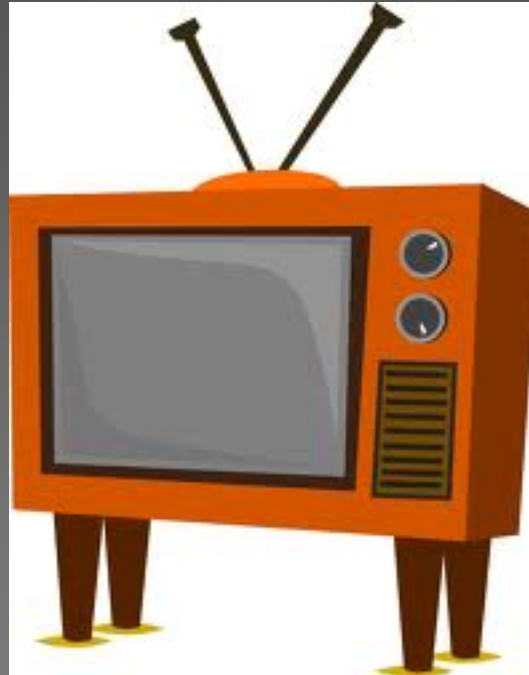
FOCUS ON THE FAMILY

No family is perfect, but positive family interactions and support has been found to reduce peer conflict, aggression, delinquency, and substance use among teens and adolescents.



TOO MUCH MEDIA, IS NOT A GOOD THING!

Studies have shown that teenagers are prone to act out violently and aggressively because of media influences.



Advertising and movies propel the idea of bad habits being "cool". Ex. Smoking cigarettes

IN-SCHOOL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Schools can implement policies and programs to help students avoid or reduce health risk behaviors that contribute to the leading causes of death and disability among young people as well as among adults.

Students can promote a healthy and safe school and community through:

- ▶ Peer Education,
- ▶ Peer Advocacy
- ▶ Cross-age Mentoring
- ▶ Service Learning
- ▶ Participation on School Health Teams that Address Health, Education, and Youth Issues.



OUT OF SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Out of school time programs have been linked with decreased drug abuse, delinquency, and sexual risk behaviors among teenagers and adolescents.

Out of school time programs focus on promoting personal and social skills that can reduce rates of drug use and problem behaviors.

BUILD ON YOUR SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE

CDC reports that teens and adolescents with strong social and emotional competence are less likely to engage in risky behaviors.

Skills related to social and emotional competence are:

- ▶ Communication Skills
- ▶ Emotional Awareness
- ▶ Peer Refusal Skills
- ▶ Conflict Resolution

STAY INFORMED, AND ASK QUESTIONS!



REFERENCES

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QUESTIONS??

